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Chair: Mr. Poels (Vice-Chair) ..... (Belgium)

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In the absence of Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia), Mr. Poels (Belgium), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 47: Effects of atomic radiation
(A/71/46 and A/C.4/71/L.5)

1. **Mr. Yonekura** (Japan), Chair of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, introduced the report of the Scientific Committee on its sixty-third session (A/71/46). The session, which had marked the Scientific Committee's sixtieth anniversary, had been attended by all 27 members and more than 120 scientists. The occasion had also marked the publication of a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) booklet entitled "Radiation: Effects and Sources," which was based on the Scientific Committee's work and was being translated into four official languages, as well as two anniversaries: 30 years since the Chernobyl accident and 5 years since the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. At the session, the Committee had been lauded for its expertise and efforts to share its findings with a broader audience.

2. Four scientific annexes had been approved and were currently being published. The first contained the methodology for estimating human exposure to radioactive discharges in the environment. In recent years, the Scientific Committee had reviewed and updated its methodology to make it more robust and suitable for estimating global and regional exposures from routine discharges to various environments. It had subsequently been used to update and extend the assessment of radiation exposures from electricity-generating technologies. While radiation exposure was only a minor factor in energy policy analyses, the Scientific Committee's assessments offered some insight into it.

3. The largest collective dose — or population dose — to the public and to workers per unit of electricity generated came from the coal cycle owing to exposures to naturally occurring radionuclides in coal. The combined collective dosage per unit of electricity generated was greater for coal than for nuclear exposure, although exposure to long-lived radionuclides was estimated to last up to 500 years. Doses were slight in normal operations, but would be of a greater magnitude in the event of a nuclear accident.

4. The Scientific Committee had reviewed the biological effects of two internal emitters – tritium and uranium radioisotopes. Internal emitters were radionuclides which were consumed or inhaled and, unlike external emitters, delivered uneven doses, which made them more complex to measure and assess. Tritium, a radioactive isotope of hydrogen, occurred both naturally and artificially in the operation of nuclear reactors or other industrial installations, where workers were mostly exposed to it, and was encountered mainly in the form of tritiated water. The Committee had concluded that models could estimate the distribution of tritiated water in the human body, but not at the cellular or DNA level. Based on the available data, there was no firm and direct evidence of its carcinogenic effect. The Committee had also concluded that the accumulation of tritium in organic foodstuffs warranted further investigation.

5. The second study had reviewed the biological effects of exposure to the radioisotopes of uranium, a naturally-occurring element. Workers' internal exposures to uranium mainly resulted from mining activities and its use as a nuclear fuel. Although there was public concern about exposure to depleted uranium used in munitions, the Scientific Committee had concluded that no clinically significant pathologies had been caused by it. While tumorigenic effects in animals were linked to radiological toxicity, other effects had been clearly linked to chemical toxicity. Acceptable uranium levels in drinking water were determined by chemical rather than radiological toxicity.

6. Following the publication of its 2013 report on the levels and effects of exposure at the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident (A/68/46), the Scientific Committee had established a group of experts to keep abreast of new scientific publications on that subject. The group had published its first digest in a 2015 white paper in English and Japanese and would formally present its 2016 white paper in Japan in November. The Scientific Committee continued to deem the major assumptions and findings of its 2013 report valid. Thus far, there had been no evidence of

increased thyroid cancer rates attributable to radiation exposure. However, some scientific topics warranted further analysis or additional research. The Scientific Committee would continue to follow developments and would update its 2013 report at an appropriate time. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee had worked to share its findings with those who valued that information the most. Following its previous outreach efforts in Japan, another event was planned in Aizu-Wakamatsu. The Scientific Committee would continue convening focus groups in the health, social services and education sectors that would be able to use and share those findings.

7. Turning to the Scientific Committee's programme of work, he said that, in 2014, its secretariat had launched an online platform to facilitate data collection on medical exposure and, more recently, on occupational exposure. Its collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) had resulted in joint questionnaires for its global surveys. The secretariat had also requested that countries nominate national contact points to coordinate the collection of national data. By October 2016, over 50 countries had nominated their contact persons and other countries were invited to do so. The Scientific Committee would conduct a preliminary evaluation of the data at a subsequent session. Its secretariat would begin conducting similar surveys on public exposures from natural and artificial sources of radiation.

8. The Scientific Committee's current strategic plan covered the 2014-2019 period. Long-term strategic directions for its work beyond 2019 included continuing to evaluate people's exposure levels, biological mechanisms and the health effects of low-dose radiation and dose rates and to assess the health implications of population exposures. To that end, the Scientific Committee would establish working groups, seeking out expertise from States which were not part of its membership; bolster efforts to present its findings; and further enhance links with other bodies. Those strategies would entail a change in the Scientific Committee's working methods, which could affect the Fourth Committee's future deliberations on its membership. In that regard, the Scientific Committee recalled the Secretary-General's recent report to the General Assembly on that topic (A/69/350) and maintained that any increase in membership must above all enhance its ability to conduct its scientific work.

9. Studies on biological mechanisms and the risks of exposure to radon had been launched in 2016 and a few short papers would be published. A study on the risk of second cancers after radiotherapy and a general review of epidemiological studies on radiation and cancer would be started in 2017. The Scientific Committee's work was fundamental to the international radiation safety framework and to the decisions made by Governments and international bodies. The transfer of information was supported by precluding the Scientific Committee from deliberating on protection or technological decisions.

10. The Scientific Committee provided added value to the global community as a cost-effective mechanism for sharing scientific knowledge and had earned respect internationally for its objectivity, independence and quality of work, attributes which needed to be maintained in the future. It had also demonstrated flexibility when conducting its focused evaluation of the consequences of the Fukushima nuclear accident, which had offered many valuable lessons for the Scientific Committee's working methods.

11. The contributions made by some Member States to the general trust fund established to support the work of the Scientific Committee helped the secretariat to accelerate work and address outreach and infrastructure. Much, if not all the outreach work by the Scientific Committee was financed by voluntary contributions to the trust fund. The secretariat's capacity to support the Scientific Committee and take on new projects would be significantly reduced if contributions were not sufficient and sustained, and therefore he would be grateful if the General Assembly could encourage such contributions.

12. **Mr. Liu Jun** (China) said that, in March 2016, his Government and the United States had formally established a nuclear security demonstration centre, the largest of its kind in the Asia-Pacific region and possibly in the entire world. It was well equipped and designed to enhance any exchange or training. He wondered whether the Scientific Committee had engaged in any contact with that centre.

13. **Mr. Yonekura** (Japan), Chair of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic

Radiation, responding to the question posed by the representative of China, said that the Scientific Committee focused solely on evaluating the levels and effects of radiation and did not work on protection or other policy matters. Other international bodies, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), would be more appropriate participants in such initiatives.

General debate

14. **Ms. Kemppainen** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union was satisfied with the outcome of the sixty-third session of the Scientific Committee. That Committee's work and assessments had played a key role in improving the international scientific understanding of exposure to ionizing radiation and its health and environmental effects and in providing essential and authoritative scientific information to the international community. Earlier key assumptions and findings set out by the Scientific Committee in its 2013 report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident had been further confirmed by publications.

15. The European Union welcomed the Scientific Committee's cautious approach in evaluating epidemiological studies of radiation effects and its intention to publish a dedicated document on quality criteria in that domain. It also welcomed the completion of the evaluation on radiation exposure from electricity generation and on the doses, risks and effects of radiation from internally deposited tritium and radionuclides of uranium.

16. The Scientific Committee's programme of work was in line with the priorities of the European Union, which were reflected by its research community's strategic agenda on radiation protection, and contributed to the Multidisciplinary European Low Dose Initiative (MELODI).

17. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) said that the Scientific Committee's professionalism and efficiency were evidenced by its report (A/71/46). Argentina was satisfied by the findings of the comparative study on radiation exposure from electricity generation, which showed that the largest collective dose to workers per unit of electricity generated was found in the solar power cycle, followed by the wind power cycle, owing to the large amounts of rare earth metals required and the natural radionuclides to which workers were exposed during mining of low-grade ore. Those important findings should be used alongside other data to determine which electricity-generating technologies best served national and global interests. Additionally, the Committee's conclusions on the biological effects of selected internal emitters clearly showed that international standards for protection against tritium radiation were in line with existing knowledge and that the values of weighting factors for tritium emissions were adequate. It was to be hoped that the United Nations specialized agencies responsible for establishing those standards would take note of the Committee's landmark conclusions.

18. With regard to the future work of the Scientific Committee, Argentina was pleased that its proposals concerning exposure to radon in homes and the workplace and its scientific views on the dose and dose rate effectiveness factor had been accepted and were already being acted on. Until the Committee issued its report on radon exposure, special agencies must refrain from changing the current standards. Recalling that ambiguity on the use of the dose rate effectiveness factor had led to media confusion about the impact of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident, he said that Argentine experts had contacted the secretariat and were ready to work to resolve the issue.

19. Argentina would continue to make substantive contributions in kind to the Scientific Committee, such as the recent translation into Spanish of the UNEP publication entitled "Radiation: Effects and Sources". However, it was unacceptable for the Committee to rely on pledges of voluntary contributions to the general trust fund in order to maintain the intensity of its work and improve the dissemination of its findings to the public in the official languages of the Organization. It was a statutory requirement for core activities to be financed from the United Nations budget.

20. **Mr. Díaz Ortega** (Mexico) said that information on the impact of atomic radiation collected by the Scientific Committee had proved useful, allowing

Member States to evaluate risks and put into effect radiation protection measures. Minimizing the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons should be at the core of all multilateral discussions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the global security agenda.

21. As a member of the Scientific Committee, Mexico participated actively in the review and evaluations of the scientific issues under its remit and had appointed a leading expert to the Committee. To promote greater understanding of the Committee's work, it was essential to disseminate its activities effectively by leveraging modern information and communications technology and using layperson's terms. That would require greater efforts and incur costs that must be taken into account. In that regard, Mexico had cooperated with Spain and Argentina in the translation of the UNEP publication on radiation for use as a scientific guide for the general public. Raising awareness of the devastating impacts of nuclear weapons had fostered international debate on the issue and the international community must continue to build on the lessons learned.

22. **Ms. Sayed** (Pakistan) said that, as a member of the Scientific Committee, Pakistan was cognizant of its important role in disseminating knowledge about the levels, effects and risks of radiation. Aware of the many potential uses and benefits of nuclear technology, and of its devastating negative side effects, nations were sensitized to the need for extreme caution as they broadened their use of nuclear energy and nuclear applications in health, agriculture, industry, research and development.

23. Pakistan had a robust national infrastructure, which met international safety and security standards for nuclear installations, to protect workers, the general public and the environment from radiation stemming from the peaceful use of radioactive material in power plants, medical centres and other facilities. The Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority was responsible for controlling, regulating and supervising radiation safety in all facilities operated by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission and other public and private sector bodies. Nuclear facilities were required to develop radiation safety policies and procedures, in compliance with regulatory requirements to limit radiation exposure and mitigate radiological consequences. Mitigation measures and emergency plans must be in place to protect the public in the event of accidents at nuclear facilities. Furthermore, all nuclear facilities were required to develop comprehensive radiological environmental monitoring programmes to sample and measure radiological levels in their vicinity.

24. The Regulatory Authority, a national warning point and the competent authority designated under early notification and assistance conventions for coordination of nuclear or radiological emergencies at the national and international levels, had developed a thorough emergency preparedness and response system. Pakistan regularly participated in emergency exercises conducted by IAEA. In addition to routine inspections by the Regulatory Authority, the Directorate General of Safety, the independent safety body of the Atomic Energy Commission, conducted periodic inspections of all facilities handling radioactive sources. The Directorate also inspected and maintained a database of sealed radioactive sources in all Commission facilities to ensure their safe storage and use. Health monitoring programmes and free medical care for workers had been developed and implemented in all Commission facilities. To date, no incident of radiation-induced diseases, including cancer, had been reported.

25. Pakistan remained firmly committed to upgrading infrastructure and building capacity, in collaboration with international organizations, to support radiation safety and to guard against the harmful effects of atomic radiation. Foolproof protective and safety measures were vital.

26. **Ms. Arredondo Pico** (Cuba) said that the current work of the Scientific Committee was of the utmost importance, in particular its follow-up on the levels and effects of radiation exposure due to the nuclear accident following the great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami. Her delegation was pleased to note that recent data had revealed no increase in the risks associated with exposure in humans, meaning that there would be no higher incidence of disease in Japanese citizens living near the affected area. The wide range of topics and the high scientific level of the Committee's reports rendered them invaluable reference documents for the adoption of national and international radiation protection standards.

27. Seventy-one years after the indiscriminate and unjustifiable attack on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the major world Powers had yet to give up their nuclear arsenals. Greater efforts were needed to ban and destroy nuclear weapons once and for all. Cuba reaffirmed its position that the only effective way to guarantee international peace and security and to prevent the future use of weapons that threatened the annihilation of humankind was to adopt an international legal instrument that would totally eliminate weapons of mass destruction and, above all, nuclear weapons. Current international law was insufficient. It was also vital for all Member States to guarantee that their use of nuclear energy was strictly for peaceful purposes.

28. Despite economic difficulties stemming from the cruel economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba, his country had offered its assistance to the brotherly people of Ukraine following the Chernobyl accident through its humanitarian programme in Tarará. The programme, in addition to providing care to thousands of children affected by atomic radiation, had played an important scientific role as the data collected had been disseminated at major scientific events and had been used by a number of agencies and institutions of the United Nations system. It was important to maintain and strengthen the links between the Scientific Committee and bodies such as WHO, IAEA and UNEP. All of humanity stood to benefit from such cooperation through the application of technological advances, particularly in health and environmental protection.

29. **Mr. Ilnytskyi** (Ukraine) said that, given the potentially harmful effects of exposure to radiation on present and future generations, there was a continuing need to compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and analyse their effects on mankind and the environment. It was also important to disseminate the results of the work of the Scientific Committee, whose assessments of global and regional exposures to radiation provided the foundation for formulating international standards for the protection of the public and workers against ionizing radiation. As an active member of the Scientific Committee, Ukraine stood ready to participate in updating and consolidating the findings on the radiological consequences of the accident at the Fukushima-Daiichi nuclear power station. Follow-up was needed in order to continue assessing the level and effects of radiation exposure resulting from that accident. The increased incidence of thyroid cancer among victims of nuclear accidents required further consideration as, according to Ukrainian estimates based on the Chernobyl disaster, symptoms surfaced approximately four years later.

30. His delegation acknowledged the progress made by the Scientific Committee on its programme of work and welcomed the updating of the methodology for estimating public exposures from discharges. That document was particularly important given the need to establish sanitary zones around Ukrainian nuclear power plants, including a radioactive waste storage facility within the 30-kilometre zone. He also looked forward to the finalization and approval of the crucial Scientific Committee document on radiation exposure from electricity generation.

31. April 2016 had marked the thirtieth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the effects of which had rippled far beyond the more than 2,000 contaminated towns and villages across Ukraine. As part of the ongoing attempts to mitigate the consequences of the catastrophe, construction of the New Safe Confinement was under way and in late November 2016 sliding arches would be pulled over the destroyed reactor. The anniversary offered an important opportunity to heighten awareness of the complexities of recovery and the needs of the affected areas and to mobilize international assistance complementing national mitigation efforts.

32. Ukraine recognized the Scientific Committee's contribution to the development of State legislation and norms governing nuclear and radiation safety and fully supported the ongoing activities of the Committee, whose scientific role and independence must be maintained.

33. **Mr. Karem** (Iraq) said that the increased use of nuclear and radioactive energy worldwide called for scientific research with a view to establishing appropriate mechanisms to address the dangers of radiation and to reduce the impact of exposure to it. Information on measures to combat radiation exposure should be disseminated in order to increase the exchange of information and interaction among Member States investing in relevant studies and raise popular awareness of the effects of radiation on human health and the environment. All countries bore a shared

responsibility to ensure that nuclear and radioactive energy was used safely and in accordance with international regulations and frameworks, given the potential impact of radioactive pollution on humankind as a whole. Moreover, developed countries investing in nuclear energy and technology must assume their responsibilities in that regard.

34. The adverse effects of atomic radiation on human beings and the environment were of grave importance. His Government was bound by the Iraqi Constitution to fulfil its international obligations in the areas of non-proliferation and the development, production and use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Iraq was working with the relevant international organizations to contain the effects of environmental pollution resulting from previous armament programmes. Atomic radiation and the attendant environmental pollution had given rise to deadly diseases that could be transmitted from one generation to the next.

35. Iraq continued to endure the aftereffects of radioactive contamination from previous wars and armament programmes – the product of the previous regime's ill-considered policy – as well as from the destruction of military facilities and the use of chemical weapons by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. His Government had begun the process of liberating Mosul and ridding it of the scourge that imperilled the entire world; hence its need for financial and human resources and international assistance to mitigate the effects of radiation and manage and dispose of radioactive resources and inactive plants. Iraq stood ready to cooperate with the United Nations system and the international community on the formulation of frameworks for the safe use of nuclear energy and called on all other countries to do the same.

36. **Mr. Prasad** (India) said that, although his delegation appreciated the work of the Scientific Committee, it was concerned that the body's projections with regard to collective exposure to radiation and its impact on health could lead to misinterpretations. In view of the serious efforts undertaken to predict possible cancer deaths attributable to such exposure following the accidents in Chernobyl and Fukushima, the scientific community and international bodies should limit their use of collective dose when estimating risk. There was no conclusive evidence that the offspring of parents exposed to radiation had an increase in hereditary effects, such as congenital malformation, a view that was strongly supported by data published by Indian scientists on newborns in the high-level natural radiation area of the Kerala Coast. It should also be noted that using risk assessment to arrive at a limit of radiation exposure was leading to confusion among the public, as the limit was much lower than the dose that could cause significant harm. It was also problematic to attribute the detection of increased nodes in Japanese children to radiation exposure, as that finding could be due to the extensive aggressive scanning carried out among the population, in particular children, in Japan.

37. Epidemiological studies should be encouraged worldwide, including in high background radiation areas, with a view to confirming the inappropriateness of applying the linear no-threshold model in radiation protection philosophy. Further investigation was required into whether cancer could be attributed to radiation exposure in the light of reported cases of a reduction in the incidence of natural cancer in low-dose/low-dose rate situations. Moreover, the application of modelling dispersion/radiological impact for long periods of time in order to estimate human exposures due to radioactive discharges might not be correct, since population density and distribution would not be predictable for the future.

38. **Mr. Sahraei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that nuclear energy provided a clean source of energy that was useful in a variety of areas, including health care, food preservation and scientific and technological research and development. Despite those beneficial uses, the international community should remain wary of the harmful effects of atomic radiation on human beings and the environment.

39. His Government attached great importance to the role of the Scientific Committee. As a body that promoted wider knowledge and understanding of the risks of radiation, it should benefit from the contribution and knowledge of all countries that possessed a high level of relevant expertise and potential, including through their membership and participation in the work of the Committee. The Islamic Republic of Iran fit that description and reiterated its interest, as expressed in writing to the

Secretary-General in 2013, in becoming a member of the Scientific Committee and contributing to its work.

40. **Mr. Bin Momen** (Bangladesh) said that his delegation welcomed the report of the Scientific Committee (A/71/46), in particular the useful evaluations of the effects of ionizing radiation and its risks for public health and occupational safety. Its evaluation in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident was of particular importance to his country as it continued to invest in nuclear safety and safeguards. Given the cross-cutting relevance of that body's work, it was crucial that it coordinate with other relevant United Nations entities, including IAEA. The Scientific Committee had made welcome efforts, supported by UNEP, to disseminate its work. However, additional voluntary contributions were needed for that purpose.

41. Given the experience of Bangladesh in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy, it was willing to explore avenues to broaden the scope of its engagement with the Scientific Committee. His delegation had taken note of observations regarding the optimal size and capacity of that body, as well as the alternative means of engagement available, and remained open to further discussion in that regard.

42. As data collection and sharing had an impact on the capacity of the Scientific Committee to effectively carry out its work, his Government would contribute in that regard and urged other Member States to designate their national points of contact.

43. **Mr. Arcia Vivas** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that, although the Scientific Committee had carried out commendable work on the effects of radiation exposure in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake in Japan, the body should examine the new information available on that accident.

44. The use of nuclear technology was on the rise globally, making it urgent for the international community to strengthen international norms based on scientific evaluations, an area in which the Scientific Committee could be very useful. Its studies could contribute to decision-making at the State and multilateral levels on the use of nuclear technologies, and to the debate on energy, waste management, the medical applications of such technologies and environmental protection.

45. Despite having experienced an era in which atomic weapons had been used against civilian populations and the nuclear arms race had accelerated, resulting in a dark legacy of weapons capable of destroying the planet several times over, humankind had nonetheless benefited from advances in the development of nuclear energy and technology for peaceful purposes. Nevertheless, the peaceful use of nuclear energy was accompanied by the risk of human error or natural disasters, and the tragedies of Chernobyl and Fukushima served as a reminder of the need for precaution and the broad sharing of all available information on the effects of atomic radiation. His Government supported investigations by the Special Committee into the potential effects on the population and the environment of past nuclear tests conducted in remote regions.

46. Given the risks, efforts to educate and to raise the awareness of the public were essential. That included highlighting the differences between human exposure to radiation from nuclear sources and exposure for medical purposes. The Department of Public Information should use its various platforms to continue circulating and promoting information on the effects of atomic radiation.

47. His Government reiterated its commitment to developing international standards for protection against the effects of atomic radiation, and would work towards that aim with the relevant specialized bodies, thereby promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and helping to protect the world population, biodiversity, water resources and ecosystems.

48. **Mr. Liu Jun** (China) said that his country's atomic energy agency had established a national nuclear security technical centre to intensify the daily monitoring and management of nuclear security. A member of IAEA since 1984, China had acceded to several relevant international conventions, including the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, and had concluded bilateral agreements on nuclear assistance involving cooperation and exchange activities with over 30 countries.

49. China remained committed to working with other countries to establish an international nuclear security system and share the benefits of the use of nuclear energy. In 2016, the Chinese President had attended the

fourth World Nuclear Security Summit; his Government had also intensified its exchange and cooperation with other concerned countries on sources of nuclear radiation. China intended to contribute further to the work of the Scientific Committee, and his delegation hoped that the Committee would strengthen its cooperation with United Nations specialized agencies in order to enhance the effectiveness of its work.

Draft resolution A/C.4/71/L.5: Effects of atomic radiation

50. **Mr. Aoki** (Japan), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, said that his country had a long-standing commitment to the safety of nuclear activities, particularly in the light of the Fukushima nuclear accident. The draft resolution affirmed support for the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and its vital work of scientific review in the service of the scientific community and the broader public, contributing to greater understanding of the effects of ionizing radiation. Noting the importance of disseminating the Scientific Committee's findings, he welcomed the publication of the report on the levels and effects of radiation exposure after the 2011 great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami. At a series of public dialogues held in Fukushima prefecture in 2016, a team of experts from the Scientific Committee had presented the findings of the report, informing people on the subject and alleviating their concerns.

51. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications and that Peru, the Russian Federation, Spain and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had become sponsors.

52. *Draft resolution A/C.4/71/L.5 was adopted.*

Agenda item 51: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (*continued*)

Agenda item 52: Comprehensive review of special political missions (*continued*) (A/71/330)

53. **Mr. Elmodir** (Libya) said that special political missions, which were growing in number and diversity, were one of the most important tools at the Organization's disposal to maintain international peace and security through preventive diplomacy. As the objective of such missions was to prevent conflict and support the choices made by the State, the principle of national ownership and coordination with United Nations agencies must be promoted. Moreover, security concerns must be linked to economic and social development, with a view to strengthening the capacities of States to safeguard the interests of their citizens and provide them with essential services. The mandates of political missions must be defined clearly and their staff must be selected in line with those mandates in a manner that ensured respect for State sovereignty and independence.

54. The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) had been established to support the legitimate choice and aspiration of the Libyan people to build a democratic State based on the rule of law. In the aftermath of the outbreak of armed conflict in Tripoli in 2014, the Mission had been forced to relocate to Tunisia to pursue its work of promoting political dialogue and rapprochement between the factions. Those efforts had culminated in the conclusion of the Libyan Political Agreement and the subsequent formation of the Presidential Council of the Government of National Accord, which was striving to resolve the Libyan crisis and empower the country to build a State of civil institutions, promote development and combat terrorism.

55. UNSMIL must build on that momentum by enabling all parties to achieve a comprehensive solution through compromise. In his recent address at the general debate of the General Assembly, the Chairman of the Presidential Council had called on all parties in Libya to work together to help the country achieve peace and security and tackle the growing economic problems. His delegation hoped that the Mission would be able to return to Tripoli with a renewed mandate to build national institutions and capacities, address human rights violations, collect weapons, demobilize and reintegrate former combatants, and promote the role of youth and women in decision-making. Such actions would enable the Government to implement a national development plan in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union. The only option left to a Libyan people weary of conflict was to pursue a political solution through dialogue and negotiation; to that end,

he hoped that UNSMIL would redouble its efforts to urge all parties to implement the Libyan Political Agreement and make recommendations on how to resolve the crisis and regain the Libyan people's trust.

56. **Ms. Haile** (Eritrea) said that the General Assembly played a critical role in maintaining international peace and security by providing the Secretariat with guidance on policy matters pertaining to special political missions. Her delegation supported actions to enhance the Assembly's engagement, including through regular dialogue with the Secretariat. Given that the Committee's previous attempts to increase and enhance Member State engagement had fallen short, there was a need to establish inclusive, well-structured and results-oriented dialogue at the current session. Eritrea looked forward to receiving in the future a more comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on policy matters concerning special political missions, including information on the measures taken by the Secretariat to enhance the effectiveness and ensure the transparency and equitable geographic representation of such missions.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.